

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6211

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY

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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 15764

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, PDEV, RH

SUBJECT: CURRENT STATUS OF CONSULTATIONS ON RHODESIA

REF: LONDON 15420

1. SUMMARY: BRITISH GOVERNMENT DURING NOVEMBER 22 BRIEFING BY ZAMBIAN PRESIDENTIAL ASSISTANT MARK CHONA AND IN MEETING WITH ZAMBIAN, TANZANIAN AND BOTSWANAN REPS ON NOVEMBER 28, WAS TOLD OF SECRET MEETINGS IN LUSAKA TO ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE RHODESIAN ISSUE. PRESIDENT KAUNDA AND PRIME MINISTER VORSTER TAKING LEAD, BUT PRESIDENT NYERERE, PRIME MINISTER SERETSE KHAMA AND SAMORA MACHEL ALSO TAKING ACTIVE PART. IAN SMITH RELEASED RHODESIAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT LEADERS TO PARTICIPATE. EFFORTS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE, BUT TWO MAIN OB-
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STACLES ARE DISUNITY IN LIBERATION MOVEMENT AND FAILURE

OF IAN SMITH TO SHOW HIS HAND. US COULD ASSIST CURRENT EFFORTS BY RAPID REPEAL OF BYRD AMENDMENT AND POSSIBLY BY BRINGING OBLIQUE PRESSURES ON SOUTH AFRICA OVER NAMIBIA AND PETTY APARTHEID. END SUMMARY.

2. IN MEETING WITH EMBOFF AND AF/S DIRECTOR O'NEILL ON DECEMBER 2, NORMAN ASPIN, ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY AT FCO, GAVE RUN-DOWN ON CURRENT STATE OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN SOUTHERN AFRICAN AND RHODESIAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT LEADERS. FIRST FORMAL INDICATION BRITISH RECEIVED FROM AFRICANS CONCERNING NEGOTIATIONS WAS ON NOVEMBER 22, WHEN ZAMBIAN PRESIDENT KAUNDA SENT HIS ADVISER, MARK CHONA, TO BRIEF PRIME MINISTER WILSON AND FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN (REFTEL). CHONA TOLD BRITISH THAT DURING MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER VORSTER IN SOUTH AFRICA, VORSTER HAD PERSUADED IAN SMITH TO RELEASE JOSHUA NKOMO AND NDABANINGI SITHOLE TO ALLOW THEM TO GO TO LUSAKA WITH ANC LEADER BISHOP MUZOREWA TO MEET WITH PRESIDENTS KAUNDA AND NYERERE, PRIME MINISTER SIR SERETSE KHAMA AND SAMORA MACHEL. SITHOLE REFUSED TO GO, BUT WAS REPRESENTED AT MEETING WHICH TOOK PLACE EARLY IN NOVEMBER BY ANOTHER IMPRISONED ZANU LEADER MUGABE. ALL THE RHODESIANS RETURNED TO SALISBURY AFTER MEETING. SITHOLE SUBSEQUENTLY WENT TO LUSAKA FOR SEPARATE MEETING.

3. ACCORDING TO CHONA, PURPOSE OF DISCUSSIONS WAS TO UNIFY LIBERATION MOVEMENTS FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH SMITH. VORSTER HAD ALSO MADE PROPOSAL FOR BROADENING FRANCHISE IN RHODESIA SO THAT NEW ELECTIONS COULD BE HELD. VORSTER PROPOSAL WAS THREE-TIERED. IN DESCENDING ORDER OF IMPORTANCE, VORSTER SUGGESTED FRANCHISE BE BASED ON: A) GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION (EQUIVALENT TO SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL); B) GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION, PLUS INCOME OR PROPERTY QUALIFICATION; C) NO EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENT, BUT INCOME OR PROPERTY QUALIFICATION.

4. BRITISH HAD SUBSEQUENT CONSULTATIONS ON NOVEMBER 28, WITH ZAMBIANS (REPRESENTED BY THEIR HIGH COMMISSIONER IN LONDON), TANZANIANS (ALSO REPRESENTED BY THEIR HIGH COM-
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MISSIONER IN LONDON) AND BOTSWANANS (REPRESENTED BY SECRETARY GENERAL OF FOREIGN OFFICE FROM GABORONE). AT THAT MEETING AFRICAN REPRESENTATIVES PROPOSED THAT RHODESIAN LIBERATION LEADERS BE RELEASED AND ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY AFTER WHICH NEGOTIATIONS FOR ELECTIONS LEADING TO MAJORITY RULE WOULD BEGIN WITH SMITH REGIME. BRITISH HAVE ALSO HAD SUBSEQUENT REPORT FROM THEIR HIGH COMMISSION IN LUSAKA THAT ADDITION-

AL FRANCHISE PROPOSAL HAS BEEN PUT FORWARD WHICH WOULD GRANT VOTING RIGHTS BASED ON GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION AND OWNERSHIP OF FIVE HEAD OF CATTLE.

5. ASPIN AGAIN COMMENTED THAT IN BRITISH VIEW, AFRICANS, INCLUDING SOUTH AFRICANS BUT NOT SMITH, ARE TOO OPTIMISTIC THAT THESE DEVELOPMENTS WILL RESULT IN EARLY SETTLE-

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MENT IN RHODESIA. ASPIN MENTIONED THAT CHONA SAID LIBERATION LEADERS COULD BE RELEASED IN DECEMBER, CAMPAIGN IN JANUARY AND ELECTIONS HELD AS EARLY AS FEBRUARY. BRITISH FEEL THAT PRESSURES BEING PUT ON SMITH BY VORSTER AND DEVELOPMENTS THUS FAR CERTAINLY REPRESENT CONSIDERABLE MOVE FORWARD TOWARD SETTLEMENT. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, TWO SERIOUS OBSTACLES THAT MUST BE OVERCOME BE-

FORE ANY SETTLEMENT CAN BE REACHED. FIRST, LIBERATION MOVEMENTS MUST DEVELOP UNIFIED NEGOTIATING POSITION. BRITISH HAVE INFORMATION THAT ZANU LEADERS ARE DIVIDED AND THAT NKOMO DOES NOT HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE ZAMBIANS WHO HE FEELS ARE HELPING HIS RIVALS. THEY ALSO HAVE REPORTS THAT DIFFERENCES AMONG LIBERATION GROUPS HAVE BEEN PATCHED UP, AND THERE IS A POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPING A COMMON NEGOTIATING POSITION. THE OTHER OBSTACLE IS IAN SMITH, WHO HAS GONE ALONG WITH SOUTH AFRICANS THUS FAR, SECRET

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BUT HAS NOT REVEALED ANY NEW NEGOTIATING POSITION FOR DISCUSSION WITH THE LIBERATION LEADERS. BRITISH BELIEVE SMITH HAS NOT CHANGED HIS POSITION, REALIZES THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS ARE DIVIDED AND IS STILL NOT READY TO NEGOTIATE ON TERMS THAT MIGHT BE ACCEPTABLE TO AFRICANS. UNTIL THESE OBSTACLES ARE OVERCOME, IT IS TOO EARLY FOR OPTIMISM. BRITISH ARE NOW AWAITING FULL REPORT OF PRESS INTERVIEW BY IAN SMITH, WHICH APPEARED IN SALISBURY NEWS PAPER ON DECEMBER 1, AND IN WHICH SMITH IS REPORTED TO HAVE REITERATED THAT HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO TALK WITH THE LIBERATION MOVEMENT LEADERS IF THEY WOULD RENOUNCE "TERRORISM" AND WORK CONSTITUTIONALLY. ASPIN ALSO REPORTED THAT THERE WERE ATTEMPTS TO ARRANGE A MEETING BETWEEN SMITH AND KAUNDA BEFORE KAUNDA'S TRIP TO MOSCOW, BUT THAT THIS MEETING HAD BEEN POSTPONED UNTIL JANUARY.

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6. BRITISH POSITION IN VIEW OF THESE NEW DEVELOPMENTS IS TO LEAVE NEGOTIATIONS TO PARTIES CURRENTLY INVOLVED. THEY HAVE HAD WORD FROM BOTH CHONA AND VORSTER THAT SMITH WOULD NOT ATTEND ANY CONFERENCE CHAIRED BY THE UNITED KINGDOM BECAUSE HE WOULD HAVE TO PARTICIPATE NOT AS HEAD OF GOVERNMENT, BUT AS LEADER OF ONE OF SEVERAL REBEL FACTIONS. THIS GIVES THE BRITISH NO PARTICULAR PROBLEM AS THEY DO NOT BELIEVE IT IS NECESSARY TO ARRANGE INDEPENDENCE THROUGH THE TYPE OF CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE THAT DECIDED ON MODALITIES OF INDEPENDENCE FOR OTHER BRITISH COLONIES. IF ALL PARTIES CONCERNED IN RHODESIA ITSELF REACH AGREEMENT, BRITISH GOVERNMENT, ASPIN SAID, WOULD BE WILLING TO GO ALONG AND ARRANGE NECESSARY PARLIAMENTARY RATIFICATION. THEY DO NOT EXPECT FURTHER PROGRESS IN NEGOTIATIONS AT LEAST UNTIL PRESIDENT KAUNDA RETURNS FROM MOSCOW, AND ANTICIPATE THAT SMITH WILL HAVE TO RELEASE IMPRISONED LIBERATION LEADERS AS PRE-CONDITION TO FURTHER PROGRESS.

7. COMMENT: FROM LONDON VANTAGE POINT, THERE ARE CON-

STRUCTIVE STEPS USG COULD TAKE TO PROVIDE POSITIVE ENCOURAGEMENT TO CURRENT EFFORTS TO REACH RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT.
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MENT. ASPIN SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED SOONEST POSSIBLE REPEAL OF BYRD AMENDMENT, WHICH WOULD PUT FURTHER PRESSURE ON SMITH. WHILE IT WOULD APPEAR UNNECESSARY TO MAKE ANY DIRECT APPROACH TO SOUTH AFRICANS ON RHODESIA AT THIS TIME, IT WOULD SEEM USEFUL FOR THE US TO CONTINUE TO URGE SETTLEMENT IN NAMIBIA AND CHANGES IN PETTY APARTHEID IN ORDER KEEP UP GENERAL PRESSURE WHICH HAS LED SOUTH AFRICA TO TAKE LEADING ROLE IN RHODESIA SETTLEMENT. END COMMENT.

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